

Going back to the classroom



FE Week reporter Rebecca Cooney spends the day at the Working Men's College, London. See pages 8 and 9



Pictures by Nick Linford

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Traineeships, but only for some

Chris Henwood
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The 11-month wait for a government outline of traineeships is over — but “disappointment” has been expressed about who can take them.

They were first proposed by Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg in June last year to help 16 to 24-year-olds gain work-related skills and attitudes.

But it wasn't until last Thursday that Skills Minister Matthew Hancock finally revealed their framework.

They are being rolled out in August, but only 16 to 19-year-olds can take them, along with young people with learning difficulty assessments up to the academic age of 25.

David Hughes, chief executive of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, said: “It is disappointing, but understandable given the split of funding between government departments, that the statement is only about 16 to 19-year-olds.

“The need for traineeships is as compelling and urgent for young adults as it is for 16 to 19-year-olds and we are looking forward to an announcement on their offer soon.

Graham Hoyle, Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive, said: “It is very disappointing that the government has decided to restrict traineeships to 16 to 19-year-olds only, even if ministers have promised to review the criteria at some point.

“To make a real impact on the NEET figures and to provide a ladder

for more young adults to get on to apprenticeships, the start of this vital new programme should have been more ambitious.”

Shadow Skills Minister Gordon Marsden said: “It is deeply concerning that the government at this stage is only bringing forward this policy for 16 to 19-year-olds, despite the high levels of NEETs aged 20 to 24.

“Government ministers must ensure traineeships provide a clear progression route for young people into apprenticeships or employment.”

Martin Doel, chief executive at the Association of Colleges, said: “We look forward to continuing to work alongside government and employers on the initial roll-out of the traineeship programme on the basis of our experience of delivering to 16 to 19-year-olds and to the potential of

extending them to young people up to the age of 24, for whom we think traineeships could represent a very effective means of improving life prospects.”

A government spokesperson said: “We are announcing the 16 to 19 framework so that delivery of traineeships for this age group will be possible from the start of the 2013/14 academic year.

“We are looking to extend the traineeships programme to young people up to age 24 and we are continuing to explore the implementation issues.”

Traineeships will include work placements of up to six months, flexible training to build character and to help young people get ready for work — such as job search and interview skills, time-keeping and team

working — and will develop learners' English and maths.

However, providers without an Ofsted grade one or two will not be able to run traineeships in the scheme's first year.

The framework document says: “Where this means there is no eligible provider in a location, we will support efforts to ensure that outstanding and good provision becomes available in that area.”

Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group executive director, said she would be speaking to members about the policy, adding: “Ofsted grades are but one way of assessing provider quality.”

The AELP declined to comment on the Ofsted grade limitation to traineeships and nobody from the AoC was available for comment.

Editor's comment p4

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Top new AELP chief tweets:

@stewartsegal

Looking forward to taking up my new role within #AELPUK Thanks for the early messages of support

@IFL_Members

IfL congratulates Stewart Segal on his appointment as new chief executive of AELP

@davidhNIACE

Looking forward to working again with Stewart Segal, new ceo @AELPUK. Lots to do in partnership with us @NIACEhq on learning for & at work

@Education4Me

Congratulations to Stewart Segal, new CEO of @AELP. You have big shoes to fill!

@App4England

Congs to Stewart Segal on new job as ceo of aelp. App4Eng looks forward to working with you

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SFA ‘moves goalposts’ for small contracts

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The future of the Skills Funding Agency’s minimum contract level policy has been called into question after it emerged 50 providers have been given allocations of less than £500,000.

More than £7m could be paid out by the agency on contracts below its minimum level.

The smallest of these is for £11,274 and the biggest £414,832. They appear on the agency’s website under its outcome of quarter two review for 2012/13.

Paul Warner, Association of Employment and Learning Providers director of employment and skills, said: “The large number of new providers on the latest allocations list has to prompt the question of whether the minimum contract policy has been abandoned.

“We are increasingly taking the view that any good quality provider who wants a direct contract should have one.”

The total amount allocated to the 50 providers is £7,312,834. Included in the figure is funding for 16 to 18 apprenticeships, which the agency has said also falls under the minimum contract level rule. But, despite the number of allocations below the minimum level, an agency spokesperson said the policy was still in place.

“We continue to apply the principles of minimum contract values,” she said.

“The level at which these are set for individual procurement exercises is driven by the ability of providers to meet the needs of their communities and the provision procured.

“Investment in apprenticeships continues to be a priority for the agency.

“To ensure we continue to meet the needs of employers, in 2012/13 the agency invited new organisations on the Register of Training Organisations to submit plans to deliver new high quality apprenticeships.”

The minimum contract policy of £500,000 came into place for the 2011/12 academic year. The agency claims it has “allowed efficiencies to be realised within the sector through a reduced agency role; economies of scale and more opportunities for shared services between training organisations”.

It is understood that more than 200 providers lost their agency business when the policy was introduced because they were unable or unwilling to increase their contracts to the £500,000 mark.

“If the goalposts have now been moved, we need to have a discussion with the agency about it and perhaps have a review for the good quality providers who lost their contracts when minimum contract was first introduced,” said Mr Warner.

Lindsay McCurdy, chief executive of Apprenticeships4England, said: “It’s fantastic if the agency is reducing minimum contract levels, but there needs to be more clarity on how this has been done and how providers can get these contracts.”

An agency spokesperson said: “We ran three pilots for apprenticeships, one contracted in September for 19 to 24 apprenticeships, and two for 16 to 18 apprenticeships contracted in April and May 2013.

“All provision was openly and competitively tendered, and contracts were awarded to the organisations that could demonstrate the highest quality and support from employers.”

FE Week news in brief

Subscription to QAA

Colleges offering directly funded higher education courses will have to subscribe to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) from August.

It will be a condition of their Higher Education Funding Council for England teaching grant. The amount colleges will have to pay to subscribe will depend on how many higher education students they have.

Colleges, for the first time, will be subject to the same quality assurance arrangements as universities.

Careers report due

The National Careers Council is expected to publish its first annual report next month, *FE Week* can reveal.

The council, chaired by Dr Deirdre Hughes, first met in May last year and its report is expected to be available on June 5.

Among those to have contributed to the council’s research in its review of careers policies have been the Skills Funding Agency, and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Success rate checks

Providers are being urged to check FE Choices success rates for 2011/2012.

The rates — for comparing the performance of FE colleges and other government-funded training organisations — were due out on Thursday, May 23, on the FE Choices website.

The Skills Funding Agency said it would no longer provide tailored reports, but this information was available within Qualification Success Rate Reports, which need to be reviewed by Thursday, May 16.

Association appoints new chief

Chris Henwood
@ChrisHenwood

The incoming chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) is determined that apprenticeships will be at the top of his agenda.

Stewart Segal (pictured) takes over from Graham Hoyle OBE in three months after impressing association bosses who interviewed more than 50 candidates.

Mr Segal, who has worked with the association for a number of years, counts funding issues among his areas of expertise.

The Association of Colleges and the 157 Group welcomed his appointment and said they looked forward to working with him.

A “delighted” Mr Segal told *FE Week* that he wanted to promote apprenticeships and help to develop the FE Guild.

“We need to take the apprenticeship programme on at a time when budgets are pretty tight and funding is under pressure,” said the 56-year-old in his first interview after the announcement of his appointment.

“We need to ensure the programme is

transparent and open and has a great deal of engagement with employers.”

The father-of-two from Maidenhead in Berkshire added: “The guild is a great opportunity for the sector to take more ownership of professionalism and quality of delivery.

“It will be an important part of establishing its credibility. I’m sure that I will continue to support its development.

“Hopefully, I’ll build on the programme that’s been set out already so that all training providers can develop in their professionalism. This will help the status of vocational learning.”

Martin Dunford OBE, AELP chairman, said: “Stewart has extensive experience of direct delivery of training as well as his knowledge of the policymaking roles of the key stakeholders. This is a challenging time for training providers with reducing budgets and a range of reviews and recommendations on the future of skills funding, while the effectiveness of the work programme is also under scrutiny.”

Mr Segal was previously chief executive of national training provider Spring Skills and Hertfordshire Training and Enterprise

Council.

He has also worked with the Learning and Skills Improvement Service and the Skills Funding Agency and Education Funding Agency, serving on a number of advisory groups.

Gill Clipson, deputy chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said: “Over the years AELP has made significant progress in developing the organisation as a voice for training providers.

“It has an important role to play in shaping the skills and employment agenda for the future, and our team look forward to working with Stewart to continue to build the status of vocational learning right across the board.”

Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group executive director, said: “We have worked with Stewart in the past and found him always to be effective, thoughtful and purposeful.

“He will, we are sure, make a strong and powerful successor to Graham Hoyle.

“As a leading player in the FE Guild, we look forward to close working on teacher professionalism and on ensuring that colleges and training providers can provide clear



messages that enable learners to access the right high quality programmes for them.”

Mr Segal is expected to speak at the association’s national conference in London on June 10 and 11.

New website misses national providers

Chris Henwood
@ChrisHenwood

A newly-launched apprenticeship website aimed at employers could be leaving out national providers, it has been claimed.

A mandatory postcode section, combined with a mandatory distance field, means that providers without a base in the search area won’t show up in the results.

The Association of Employment and Learning Provider’s director of employment and skills, Paul Warner, said the promotion of providers was a concern.

“It is only fair that this issue should be rectified quickly,” he said.

The search facility, part of the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) website, returns providers and lists their Overall Apprenticeship Success Rates.

It also returns their success rates in individual apprenticeship frameworks, such as construction building — woodmachining, and compares the rates with the national average.

It was designed in response to a review of apprenticeships for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Among the recommendations of the review, carried out by jeweller Jason Holt and published last May, was for the NAS to do more to put businesses in touch with suitable providers.

A new code of conduct for dealing with queries about providers subsequently came out. The Service Standard set out how NAS handles calls from employers.

It was launched along with a nationwide radio advertising campaign promoting appren-

ticeships and news that the government was extending the £1,500 Apprenticeship Grant for Employers of 16 to 24-year-olds (AGE 16-24) to March next year.

But it sparked concerns in January that subjective official advice could be dished out because just the single “most appropriate college or training provider” would be put forward.

Paul Eeles, chief executive at EMFEC (formerly East Midlands Further Education Council) said: “It is important the criteria used are only based on evidence of college and provider performance, rather than subjective views and third-hand understanding of provision.

“It may be beneficial for NAS to publish these criteria.”

However, a NAS spokesperson later said that “if more than one provider meets their [employer] criteria we will mention this, but most often employers ask us for one name”.

“If more than one provider meets their criteria we will mention this, but most often employers ask us for one name,” he said.

“To get to the fewest providers we will ask the employer to tell us what is most important to them, which might be for example where the provider’s physical premises are or what its success rates are.

“No information will be withheld from the employer — we’re facilitating the employer to make an informed choice.”

Mr Warner said the new website represented progress.

“Progress has been made since the NAS originally floated its proposals in the sense that the employer can now be presented with more than one choice of provider and FE Choices is being used to help inform the choice,” he said.

“However, it does appear that AELP’s concern that all local centres of a national training provider should be covered by the service has not been resolved yet and it is only fair that this issue should be rectified quickly.”

Nobody from NAS was available for comment.

NAS investigates apprentices’ hours

Chris Henwood
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The National Apprenticeship Service is investigating claims that apprentices are regularly working “over and above their contracted hours”.

UnionLearn, the learning and skills organisation of the Trades Union Congress, has reported that apprentices are breaking their contracts by doing their contracted hours in the workplace — and then studying on top without pay.

A UnionLearn spokesperson said the practice was happening largely with 30-hour contract apprenticeships. Learners would spend four days in the workplace — using up all their contracted hours — and then a fifth studying for their apprenticeship.

“We’ve got concerns that training providers and employers are failing to deal with this problem. The question is whether there’s intent or not to exploit young people,” said the spokesperson.

Tom Wilson (pictured), director of UnionLearn, said: “It is essential that apprentices are protected and valued.

“Apprenticeships are a vital way to ensure that people are learning the skills needed for the UK economy and that they are receiving quality training that will lead to them being highly employable.

“Pay is an essential component of valuing our apprentices. If they are not receiving at least the minimum they are owed, the whole concept of apprenticeships is devalued.

“Given the importance the government has placed on increasing apprenticeships, we know



that protecting their ‘brand’ is essential.”

A spokesperson for the service said it would “assess” evidence to see if there was a problem.

“We have been made aware by UnionLearn that . . . some apprentices are working over and above their contracted hours without additional recompense,” she said.

“We are committed to the delivery of high quality apprenticeships and require all apprenticeships to be delivered in line with the requirements set out in the Apprenticeship framework and the Statement on Apprenticeship Quality.

“We are talking to UnionLearn, and once the details and evidence of these claims has been assessed, we will work with colleagues across the Skills Funding Agency and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to take appropriate action.”

Principal questions local merger

Chris Henwood
@ChrisHenwood

Two Midland colleges planning to merge have been accused of “ignoring” guidance from Skills Minister Matthew Hancock.

Stourbridge and Birmingham Metropolitan Colleges are set to become one institution with the 12,500-student Stourbridge’s property, rights and liabilities transferring to Birmingham Met, which had 26,000-plus learners two years ago.

The proposals had triggered a letter from Mr Hancock to David Beasley, clerk at Stourbridge, which is in the borough of Dudley.

But a spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) said there had been a constructive response and that the merger now had the minister’s blessing.

“The corporation has gone through the proper process and undertaken a college structure and prospects appraisal as set out in New Challenges, New Chances,” said the spokesperson.

However, Dudley College principal Lowell Williams (pictured), who has previously questioned the need for the merger, criticised the move.

He said many in the sector would be “surprised” the corporation of Stourbridge College had issued a dissolution order on the strength

of the process it followed.

“The consultation response document does now provide some further information on the plans for Stourbridge post-dissolution — information that really would have been more helpful in the initial consultation document,” he said.

“But the process through which this decision has been reached still seems weak.”

He added: “The minister called for a ‘meaningful’, ‘open’ and ‘competitive’ process especially ‘should one of the options involve dissolution of the college’. This advice appears to have been ignored.

“The consultation response document does make reference to a ‘range of’ discussions with potential partners’ but the nature and status of these discussions are unclear. Some appear to be little more than informal exchanges rather than more formal approaches authorised by the corporation, which would be anticipated in the circumstances.

“Certainly the ‘open and competitive process’ the Secretary of State envisaged is missing. Sadly, the decision to go ahead with the dissolution of Stourbridge College, in this manner, may reflect badly on the sector as a whole.

“I’m guessing the Secretary of State has already directed civil servants to rewrite the rules on merger and dissolution, putting into

place statutory requirements to curb some of our sector’s hard-won freedoms.

“Not surprisingly so, as many, like myself, would question whether this dissolution is an appropriate exercise of the freedoms recently bestowed on colleges.”

A spokesperson for the two colleges reissued a statement from last week and declined to comment further.

The statement read: “Both corporations have worked closely with BIS outlining the rationale for the merger and the many benefits it will bring to local learners, employers and the wider community.

“All the requirements have been met and we are now looking forward to delivering education and training to serve the needs of our communities.”

A BIS spokesperson said: “There are no plans to remove the freedoms granted in the Education Act 2011. The minister has made clear to all colleges that he expects them to follow the proper process.”



Editor’s comment

Good, but not perfect

The long-awaited traineeships announcement came with news that colleges and training providers without an Ofsted grade one or two will be banned from being involved.

This will have come as a surprise to many as the ban was not floated in the traineeship discussion document published in January.

In the FE Week office, there has been an interesting debate about the merits of the ban.

On the one hand, the policy is simple, transparent and sends an important and strong message about the importance of quality.

But is an overall Ofsted grade a reliable indicator of quality in the context of delivering traineeships?

For example, typically an Ofsted grade for a large college relates to long qualification teaching and success rates for classroom delivery — not the type of innovative employer engagement traineeships will demand.

So, an overall Ofsted grade is likely to be a crude and potentially unreliable measure.

But, on balance, and with no time to consider tenders or individual cases, it probably is the better quality criteria at hand.

All that said, a ban based on an Ofsted grades does raise a number of important questions.

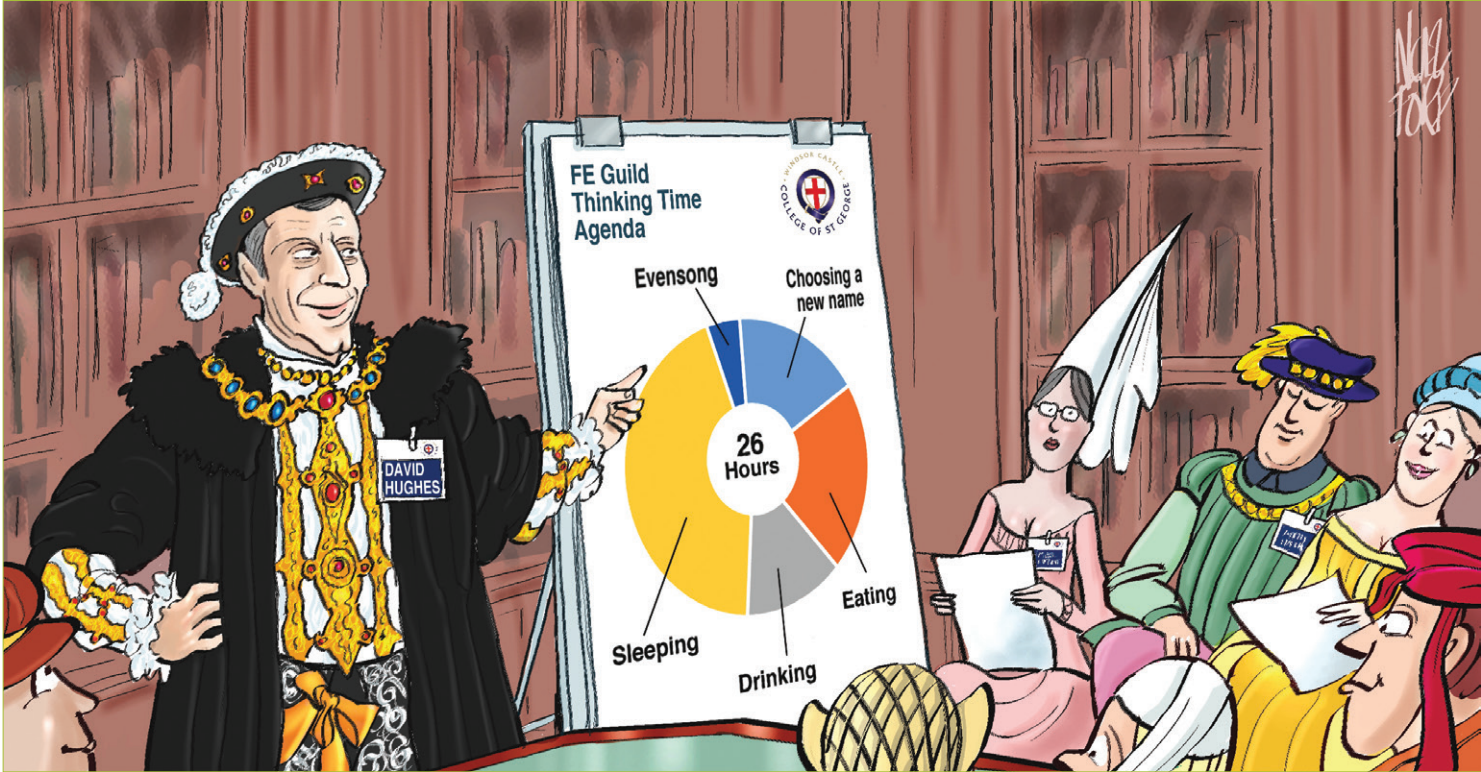
What will happen to traineeship providers if an Ofsted inspection leads to a downgrading to a grade three or four?

And what pressures might this put on Ofsted to revisit providers?

Further, will providers without a grade one or two be banned from being a traineeship subcontractor?

And finally, given traineeships are part of the 16 to 19 study programmes, is the policy inconsistent because grade three and four providers are funded to deliver these?

Nick Linford, editor



Guild meets for ‘complex thinking time’

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

Twenty-nine “key people” from FE have been invited to eat, drink, sleep and “think” in secret at Windsor Castle about the sector’s new professional body.

A spokesperson for the proposed FE Guild — which will set professional standards across the sector — said it had hired St George’s House, a retreat within the castle, for 26 hours from May 13 to allow delegates to “commit their time to confidential thinking” and to “help drive forward” the body due to launch in August.

She said the delegates — including Skills Minister Matthew Hancock — had been asked along to ensure the guild was committed to being “sector-owned and led” and “fully fit for purpose”. But while the guild confirmed 27 delegates would attend, a spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) said the meeting was “not in the ministers diary”.

The new body — yet to be officially named — would foot the £8,265 bill, equal to £285

per person, to include lunch, a three-course dinner; drinks and accommodation, the guild spokesperson said.

But one FE leader, who did not wish to be named, told *FE Week*: “I question the wisdom of spending money on high profile external venues when funding is so tight, redundancies are rife and any number of boardrooms could have been used at little cost.”

The guild spokesperson defended the move saying: “While this is, of course, more than we spend on routine events, it is appropriate for a strategic sector-wide meeting that will shape the guild over the next decade and represents fair value for delegates who we are asking to commit to 26 hours of their time to complex, in-depth and detailed confidential thinking on behalf of the sector.”

Over the two days, delegates would consider the body’s priorities, and strategic and operational relationships with employers, and would agree on what was meant by “collective leadership”. Represented bodies would be invited to commit to the new organisation.

The spokesperson added: “The venue was chosen because of its values of openness,

honesty, trust and respect.

“People from all areas of society, holding diverse views, opinions and beliefs attend St George’s to debate freely. It is important to all of us in the learning and skills sector that this is the spirit in which we, too, can shape our own future at this strategically crucial time.”

Described on its website as a “safe haven, an environment receptive to new ideas, to taking risks, to living at the intellectual edge,” the venue also gives delegates the chance to pray three times over their stay.

In a leaflet advertising the venue it says: “The offering of prayer in the chapel finds a practical expression in consultations, where the house offers space for nurturing wisdom.”

FE Week reported last month that BIS had confirmed funding, excluding VAT, of £18.8m for August to April next year and the same figure again for 2014-15 to develop the guild.

David Hughes, independent chair of the guild’s development steering group and chief executive of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, said at that time the group would now be able to recruit a chief executive before its launch.

FE Week profile

Robin Landman ~ his story

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

The chief executive of the Network for Black Professionals talks to FE Week

Robin Landman’s experience of social injustice is rooted much deeper than the workplace.

Being forced to flee apartheid-era South Africa as a boy for the London suburb of Eltham — where schoolboy Stephen Lawrence was murdered in a racist attack in 1993 — helped the 61-year-old understand the need for a Network for Black Professionals (NBP).

“When we started in 1996 it was a bit of a no-brainer — there were 500-plus college principals and only two were black,” says Landman, who wrote a bid for funding to form the Black Leadership Initiative in 2002, which later became part of the NBP.

“Now we’ve seen that number grow to 15 — that doesn’t mean they wouldn’t have become principals without us, but it’s quite likely many of them wouldn’t have had the confidence to go forward.”

Before he became the network’s director, Landman rose through FE to the deputy principal’s post at Hackney Community College. In 2010 he was awarded an OBE for services in FE to black and minority ethnic (BME) communities.

But it hasn’t been an easy ride. “My parents were both teachers and were anti-apartheid,” says Landman, who lives in Tunbridge Wells with partner April Carroll.

“It was very scary. The police would raid the house, our phone was tapped and we were constantly monitored. I remember once when the police found a piece of work that my mother, who taught Latin, had marked. They saw red markings and thought they’d found a code . . .”

He says the family fled to the UK after his father’s freedom was threatened. It was a tough move for both his parents, who had to restart their professional careers.

“My mother started working as a primary teacher and a colleague in the staffroom said ‘the degrees you people have aren’t up to much’. And that was from someone who didn’t have one,” he says.

Landman, an international relations graduate, experienced similar problems and left teachers’ training college after rugby players goaded him with racist songs.

He says: “I thought ‘I’m not putting up with that’. I was very upset but in those days — the 1970s — casual racism was common.”

He moved on to finish his degree but then experienced difficulties getting a permanent job.

“My girlfriend at the time was white and sailed into a job but I found it very difficult,” he says.

Eventually he started as a history teacher at Crown Wood Comprehensive in Greenwich, but lost out on an after-school mentoring role because his morals were “questionable” as he

“lived in sin” with his girlfriend.

“I pointed out that the man who got the job was also living in sin — it was an excuse,” explains Landman.

After working in a pupil referral unit and a stint teaching in Jamaica, he decided to try back home for a job in FE. In 1986 he got a job at Brixton College, which had many black staff.

“It was the tail-end of the Inner London Education Authority, which had a pro-active approach to race equality,” he says.

“You would walk into an interview and have 20 people in the room. Race equality people, gender equality, disability equality people, everyone was represented — I did a good interview and was offered the job.”

The Arsenal fan was quickly promoted to senior lecturer and, by the time of incorporation, was working as head of faculty at Southwark College.

He says: “In 1993 it was a great time to be a senior manager because you could actually start doing things.”

He and a colleague used the opportunity to generate income by delivering bespoke training to quangos, using surplus cash to buy IT equipment and build a crèche.

But it was also a time when black presence in FE suffered.

A role with the Association for Colleges [precursor to the Association of Colleges] gave him the chance to look into black presence in FE.

“I wrote an article saying incorporation had a bad impact on black representation in colleges. Positive county council policies attempted to increase black presence — when those colleges became independent, people lost their jobs,” he remembers.

“Incorporation was good in many ways but lots of good staff weren’t making it.”

In 1996, the sole black principal in the country invited him to Liverpool and the pair set about forming a network and self-help group, eventually evolving into the NBP.

“In 1993 Stephen Lawrence had been murdered so there were various campaigns going,” he says.

“In 1998 the Macpherson Report questioned institutional racism and said that colleges had a special responsibility to ensure students had a more positive picture about diversity. We established a commission that carried out a two-year investigation into black people in FE.”

A key recommendation was for “adequate” funding to address the under-representation of BME staff, he says and the Black Leadership



Initiative was born, with funding of £600,000 a year.

Landman, who had by now spent time in South Africa helping to restructure FE, in 2005 switched from part-time duties to full-time at the network.

As he prepares to step down this summer, Mr Landman reflects on the lessons he’s learned.

“I’ve no doubt that many of the things that happened to me could have been avoided if I’d been less vocal and more politically astute,” he says.

“It’s an important balance of being able to identify when it’s the organisation at fault and when it’s you — you have to lobby effectively, not just criticise the sector’s failings, and have solutions that work, with resilience to stick with it.

“It’s been a slow process for the network but we would contend that we’ve made a difference.

“Last year we were awarded the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Award for Volunteering for our mentoring programme, a major

confirmation that we are seen outside of the sector as effective. For such a small organisation [there are 10 staff] to attract that much recognition says that we’re good at what we do.

“The start of this process was the murder of a young black man by a white racist in the area where I grew up and experienced similar incidents,” he says, remembering the recent anniversary of Stephen Lawrence’s death.

“The question we should be asking is what’s changed? The casual racism that characterised the UK in the 1960s and 1970s is not acceptable any more and it’s very rare for the police to operate in the overtly racist way they did. But what’s not changed is also a big question.

“Now the issue of black-on-black violence has risen. My concern is that we’re losing a generation because we’re not giving them positive role models and alternatives. Why does such a high proportion of black men end up in prison? And why do many universities not recruit black students like they should? And why are black apprentices so under represented at just 9 per cent?

“More students should be able to see people that look like them walking through the corridors of power of further education colleges.”

And while representation has risen it still “falls short”, he says, considering 22 per cent of student intake in FE is BME.

“I think the day when the network withers and dies is still a long way off. We now have to focus on how we do our work with government funding getting tighter,” explains Landman.

Correction

A good sub-editor is no stranger to accusations of pedantry.

And you might say we’re plumbing new depths of punctiliousness with this complaint.

It concerns a page 10 campus round-up piece last week on City Lit’s student awards ceremony.

A missing comma straight after the age in the following picture caption can be identified as the culprit.

It read: “Jason Putman, 39 speaks at the ...”

Have you spotted something wrong with this edition of FE Week?

If so, feel free to tell us about it, including the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is. Email us at news@feweek.co.uk with Corrections in the subject line.

Comment

Provider’s ‘appalling’ pass rate

When the stories surfaced last year about Elmfield, the really big surprises were its enormous profits and huge bonus for its chief executive. The simple question raised in most minds was the morality behind that when the level of funding was supposed to go towards training. The inspection shows that they were not good at what they did and performance results are appalling.

Why not spend some of those vast profits on putting some extra support in place for your failing apprentices? National averages for overall success rates for apprentices fell last year, but for some reason this has not received much attention; neither has the decrease in 16 to 18-year-olds wanting to be apprentices.

The alarm bells should be ringing about what is happening to all the young people staying an extra year in compulsory education and training.

I have been involved with inspecting apprenticeships since day one of the Training Standards Council. The improvement overall has been remarkable and I have been amazed by some of the outstanding training, skills development and support that I have seen over 15 years.

Sadly the apprenticeship brand has begun to be diluted by introducing frameworks for areas that, with the best will in the world, do not have the technical requirements to be apprenticeships. Government has also allowed too much profit to be made by some organisations at the expense of their apprentices. Surely it is not too difficult to

ensure that the maximum profit that can be derived from training is capped?

Phil Hutton

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FE Week Experts

Let’s get behind Team UK

It’s only a couple of months away now . . . Jaine Bolton counts down to WorldSkills Leipzig 2013

This summer, 34 of the UK’s most talented young people will head to Germany to take on the best from across the world at WorldSkills Leipzig 2013. WorldSkills is the largest international skills competition in the world. Every two years around 1,000 young people aged 18 to 25 come together to compete for medals in more than 40 different skills, from electrical installation to hairdressing, from mechanical engineering to stonemasonry, from welding to cooking. At WorldSkills Leipzig, which will be held from July 2 -7, we are confident that Team UK, competing in 30 skills, will build on the success of the last WorldSkills competition, held in London in 2011. At that contest, Team UK won five gold, two silver and six bronze medals, plus 12 medallions for excellence. We were placed fifth in international ranking — ahead of France, Germany and China — the UK’s best result in the contest’s 62-year history.

“Team UK members joined in activities designed to help them better understand the role that mind and body play in performance”

With a little under two months to go until Leipzig, Team UK members are in the final stages of their intensive training, working with the WorldSkills UK trainers and performance coaches to ensure that they are fully prepared for the competition. As a key element of the training programme, the team at Loughborough University hosted a bespoke four-day ‘preparation camp’, much like the one the university devised for the London 2012 Olympics Team GB. Team UK members participated in activities that included orienteering, presentation, media skills and team building exercises, as well as classes in Yopalates, sports technology, psychology and nutrition; all designed to help them better understand the role that mind and body play in performance. Olympic bronze high jump medallist



Robbie Grabarz and his coach Fuzz Ahmed, Team GB water polo team member Alexander Parsonage and 2012 Paralympics GB swimmer Emma Hollis were all there to inspire squad members. Robbie, Alexander and Emma freely shared techniques and tips that helped to optimise their performance in the highly pressurised London Olympics. We were delighted that they will continue to support and encourage the competitors as they make their final preparations and head off to Leipzig. Each Team UK member’s story provides the inspiration for young people from across the country to be ambitious in their pursuit of skills to the highest level. Hard work and determination, with dedicated expert advice and support from the UK’s training experts and performance coaches, have played a significant part of the journey of every competitor. But they all acknowledge the ongoing support from their employers, as well as the colleges and training providers that first helped them to get involved in skills competitions. The next two months will be incredibly busy and challenging for everyone in Team UK. We encourage everyone to join Robbie, Emma, Fuzz and Alexander to get behind the team and show their full support just like the nation did for our Olympic team last year. Find out more about Team UK for WorldSkills Leipzig 2013 at www.worldskillsuk.org, follow their journey @WorldSkillsUK on Twitter and use the #WSTeamUK hashtag to show your support.

Jaine Bolton, director of the National Apprenticeship Service and UK official delegate to WorldSkills International

A chance for a hands-on experience

November may seem a long way off, but plans for The Skills Show are already well underway, says Ross Maloney

More than 70,000 people visited The Skills Show last year — and most of them were impressed with its format. Of the young people questioned as they left the show at Birmingham’s NEC, 72 per cent said the event had changed their impression of vocational education for the better; the same number said the show made them more interested in pursuing vocational education. Most importantly, as a direct result of their visit, there was a 17 per cent increase in the likelihood of them pursuing vocational education. This year, we plan to make the visitor experience even more meaningful by focusing on careers education, linking it to the curriculum and creating an offer specifically for parents and teachers who have such an influential role in a young person’s career choices.

“Young people can learn so much from watching their peers in action. It can be inspirational in terms of career choices”

We are developing ways to help young people to explore the world of vocational education, training and careers before, during and after the show. We want visitors to have a more bespoke and tailored experience that meets their individual needs and wants. This programme will provide the students involved with new, valuable practical skills that they can transfer into the workplace. Recruitment is also underway for our volunteer team leaders, and the main volunteer recruitment drive will start shortly for more than 750 people needed to ensure that the event runs seamlessly. The volunteers are, in many cases, the ‘face’ of the show and provide the vital link between the visitors and the show’s organisers. Anyone interested should keep an eye on our website, www.theskillsshow.com, or follow us on Twitter, @skillsshow, to keep up to date with the latest news. We look forward to welcoming everyone to the NEC Birmingham from November 14 to 16 for another exciting, incredible show. Young people can learn so much from watching their peers in action, and it can be inspirational in terms of career choices.



A key component in the success of the 2012 event was the Show Team, a group of enthusiastic volunteers from colleges and businesses across the country. We’ve just started recruiting for this year and are offering ten student volunteers, already studying health and safety as part of an existing course, the chance to work alongside our event health and safety team to learn while they work. Good quality health and safety experience is hard to find, which makes this opportunity a real boost for those selected, not least because they will be involved in the many different elements that make up the show. This programme will provide the students involved with new, valuable practical skills that they can transfer into the workplace. Recruitment is also underway for our volunteer team leaders, and the main volunteer recruitment drive will start shortly for more than 750 people needed to ensure that the event runs seamlessly. The volunteers are, in many cases, the ‘face’ of the show and provide the vital link between the visitors and the show’s organisers. Anyone interested should keep an eye on our website, www.theskillsshow.com, or follow us on Twitter, @skillsshow, to keep up to date with the latest news. We look forward to welcoming everyone to the NEC Birmingham from November 14 to 16 for another exciting, incredible show.

Ross Maloney, chief executive of the Skills Show

FE Week Experts

Classroom in the cloud

With the sector facing staffing cuts, Mark Stimpfig looks at the technology that can ease the challenge of teaching languages in leaner times

Youth unemployment is soaring as competition for jobs is the fiercest it has been for many years in the UK. To succeed in the labour market, college leavers need as many strings in their bow as possible — and a language can make all the difference. The National Employer Skills survey in 2011 indicated that a shortage of foreign language skills left 27 per cent of vacancies in administrative and clerical roles unfilled, while research for a British Academy report revealed that language skills were often needed for PR, sales and marketing roles. And it is fairly easy to see that a travel and tourism student with a grasp of French and Spanish is more likely to be asked for an interview. Language teaching is equally important for students who have recently arrived in the UK and who may need help with their English. However, funding cuts mean that these skills must be delivered in the most cost effective way possible. This is where new developments in technology can help to spread the skills of specialist

language teachers. Moocs (Massive Open Online Courses) allow colleges or other organisations to put their language course content online, usually at no cost. There is little or no impact on budgets and learners experience independent learning, which is helpful in preparing them for university or the workplace. However, the independent nature of the “This new technology will engage this Facebook generation with greater use of video content and access via their iPads” learning can be a downside for younger learners, with participants on recent Mooc pilots complaining about the lack of tutor involvement. There is also the risk that the content is aimed at linguists aged 18 or over, rather than younger FE learners who may be studying a language as a part of

another course. One option is to use cloud computing to help to deliver tutor-directed learning. Traditional language learning often takes place in a classroom or language lab with a teacher playing audio and video files, pausing to highlight certain points. Cloud-based language labs allow students to access material from home or elsewhere so that they can practise using video and audio content — and even collaborate with their classmates or the tutor on material. Content is streamed rather than downloaded so there is no copyright infringement and teachers can bookmark a video clip to ask relevant questions at the appropriate time. Students can deliver their assignments using the same method via video or audio. And because the cloud can be accessed through any device, a student could be practising his German on a smartphone while waiting for a bus. This gives colleges the freedom to introduce a truly blended learning model in which a percentage of the course is delivered via the cloud. Less staff time is required to deliver the course, and staff can be shared between institutions where collaboration is encouraged. This new technology will not only engage this Facebook generation with greater use of



video content and access via their iPads but will also ensure that colleges can deliver the same high quality learning while meeting the need to cut back on staff hours.

Mark Stimpfig, managing director of ConnectEd

Are we giving employers enough credit?



There is a disconnect between the interests of the education and skills establishment, and the needs of employers, says Jane Scott Paul

The consistent mantra of successive governments in designing skills policy has been employer leadership. If we are to create a highly skilled, competitive economy, industry and employers must take the lead as they understand the real skill needs. So, given that this consensus is apparently so embedded, why have we still not got it right?

The UK chartered accountancy bodies founded the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT), identifying the need to develop competent accounting staff and provide professional progression. That was more than 30 years ago and AAT has grown to a membership of 125,000. The credibility and reputation of AAT depends on our ability to deliver the skilled, ethical accountancy professionals that employers want. We have to be in a constant dialogue with employers to ensure our core professional qualifications remain rigorous and relevant. Our success is demonstrated through 600 accredited employers in all sectors of the economy, and the thousands of businesses that recognise our qualifications as a benchmark standard. Where the needs of the employer are notionally paramount, this should be enough. But we also have to meet the requirements of the regulator: Too often we have had to reshape our qualifications for no other purpose than to meet the latest fad of government and regulators — at considerable cost and with no discernable benefit to learners or employers. We have had to adapt to NVQs, the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), FE performance tables and the Specification for Apprenticeship Standards in England (SASE). The move to the QCF alone cost AAT nearly £1m. One recent regulatory change demonstrates this misalignment more clearly than any

other: the decision to amend the SASE for higher apprenticeships – and specifically to increase the minimum qualification credits required at level four from 37 to 90. “Too often we have had to reshape our qualifications for no other purpose than to meet the latest fad of government and regulators” AAT has successfully delivered apprenticeships from the outset, particularly at the higher levels that have been prioritised by the government. In 2011/12, there were more than 2,000 starts on the higher apprenticeship in accountancy, which, since its inception, had the highest take-up of any level four apprenticeship. But this framework has 51 credits and so no longer meets the SASE requirement. We are being forced to change something that demonstrably meets the needs of employers to meet the arbitrary requirements of regulation. So who did the National Apprenticeship Service bring in to carry out the review? Not

employers, but the Universities Vocational Awards Council: the same universities that are facing falling demand. This crude attempt to align vocational and academic pathways is completely inappropriate. We are not comparing like with like. Apprentices are not university students. They learn by doing at work. SASE measures only formal qualification-related credits. The skills and experience that apprentices attain through working — invaluable to them and to employers — receive no credit value at all. When the consultation was opened on this change, AAT asked a broad sample of firms who had employed accountancy apprentices if they knew how many credits it was allocated — not one of them did, nor did they see it as relevant. This mismatch of cultures has again downgraded the voice of the employer. A greater irony is that, irrespective of notional credits, the AAT level four is already recognised by many universities and allows direct access to the second year of relevant degrees. Skills policy is a hot topic, with all parties talking about putting employers in the driver’s seat. My plea is to have the courage of your convictions, let employers drive but get rid of the road blocks put in their way by a skills bureaucracy that only pays lip service to employers’ expertise and needs.

Jane Scott Paul, chief executive of Association of Accounting Technicians

Adult college ‘changes lives’

Working Men’s College, a specialist designated institution in North London, is celebrating an ‘outstanding’ Ofsted grade. Rebecca Cooney reports

When Ofsted published its report late last month, Working Men’s College principal Satnam Gill (pictured right) described the result as a “real tribute to the amazing work” by teachers and students.

He said: “On leaving, the lead inspector said ‘This is what adult education should be’.”

In the report, published on April 30, the Camden adult education college gained level one in every area for overall effectiveness, level one for its provision in the visual arts and subject areas for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and a level two in the language, literature and culture subjects.

The report praised Mr Gill’s “excellent leadership and clear strategic direction” and highlighted the college’s success rates, which were “significantly above national averages for nearly all subjects”.

According to Ofsted, most of the college’s students study part time, with just 62 out of 4,204 studying full time last year, and 3,009 studying at level one or below.

The college, the oldest adult education institution in Europe, draws its intake largely from the surrounding borough, an area that has high levels of deprivation.

The report noted the “very high” standard of learners’ work and the progress many of them made, despite “significant barriers” to learning.

It continued: “Learners develop many additional skills, gaining confidence and enhancing their lives and their employability.

“Many report that their lives have changed significantly as a result of their college experience.”

Level two childcare student Charity Uruakpa, who came to the college after struggling to become a lawyer, said: “My tutor made me



realise there’s more to life than disappointment, and now I’m going to have a second career.

“I think this college is truly excellent — they know how to give people second chances here.”

Twenty-seven per cent of the residents of Camden are from ethnic minority communities, and the college’s ESOL provision was described as not only “outstanding” but also as “stimulating” and “fun”.

Inspectors praised teaching at the college, particularly the high expectations that the “well-qualified, empathetic and knowledgeable” tutors had of students, resulting in “learners who are highly motivated and undertake further independent study and research”. They also praised the care and support at the college.

Mr Gill added: “It is wonderful that during a period of considerable financial problems for adult education, Ofsted has recognised that WMC is a fantastic place to study, that we deliver outstanding results for our learners and the local community.”



All pictures by Nick Linford, apart from above, which came courtesy of the Working Men’s College



Reporter Rebecca Cooney learning basic ceramics techniques with tutor Joanna Voit

FE Week reporter Rebecca Cooney went to ‘back to college’ to find out more about London’s outstanding adult education institution. . .

I’d be lying if I said I wasn’t a bit nervous

About the classes on my whirlwind tour of some of the courses at Working Men’s College, including graphic design, ceramics, childcare and most daunting of all, life drawing.

I struggled to put my finger on what seemed unusual about the modern foyer of the red-brick Edwardian college building, where posters for public lectures held in the 19th century sat alongside television screens advertising today’s courses, until I realised most of the students coming in and out of classes weren’t teenagers — their ages seemed to range from around 18 to 80.

In my life drawing class, former TV producer, 68-year-old Paul Kafno, told me he’d attended the class for eight years.

“I did a life drawing class at university, and I wasn’t any good at it, so I thought ‘when I retire I’m going to learn to do it properly’,” he said.

Similarly, while I was being taught to make a basic (and wobbly) pinch pot by ceramics tu-

tor Joanna Voit, one of my fellow students, a retired languages teacher who was sculpting an impressive peacock, told me she took up ceramics because she wanted to do something with her hands.

Childcare student Jamila Khan, 23, hoped that her course would help her to achieve her dream of working in a nursery.

“The course has helped me to understand how to work with difficult children and gave me work experience, which is important when you want to get a job,” she said.

“I wouldn’t want to go to any other college.”

It’s easy to see how Working Men’s College got its grade. I loved all of the classes I went to, and more importantly, the learners clearly did too.

Tutors were supportive, patient and helpful, whether teaching learners wanting to go on to higher education or into employment, or learners simply exploring different sides of their personalities. Or trying to teach me to make a pot in 25 minutes.



Creating an album cover in graphic design class with help from tutor Tony Jennings








Above: Rebecca Cooney concentrating on shading in life drawing class
Below: Life drawing learner Paul Kafno talks to Rebecca about his artwork



What is a specialist designated institution?

Working Men’s College is a specialist adult education institution, as designated in the 1992 Further Education Act. In London these types of specialist designated institutions (SDI) include Morley College, the City Lit, the Mary Ward Centre and the Workers Educational Association. SDIs are classed by Ofsted as adult and community learning providers.





From left: Rebecca Cooney, childcare learner Charity Uruakpa, 42, tutor Sarah Bowman, and learner Jamila Khan, 23, displaying their homemade musical shakers

FE Week campus round-up

From Olympic silver to college gold



Ex-Hopwood Hall College student Stuart Bithell (right) wins silver at the London 2012 Olympics. He's pictured with Luke Patience. They competed in the men's 470 dinghy class sailing

As if Olympic silver wasn't enough, former Manchester college student Stuart Bithell has now added further education gold to his awards haul.

Stuart, who did a BTec sport programme at Hopwood Hall College in 2004 and 2005, claimed his medal at the London Olympics and has been named in the Association of College's (AoC) Gold Awards honours list for 2013.

The awards and honours are given to people who went to college and have since achieved

excellence in their chosen field.

He was nominated for the latest award by Lisa Mckay, a sport and fitness lecturer at Hopwood and Stuart's former tutor.

"Stuart's energy and passion is still focused on Olympic sailing and being a full-time professional sailor and he has told me that he will not rest until he has won an Olympic gold medal," she said.

"It is a great honour for the college that he has been named in the AoC Gold Awards honours list."

Nissan launch clay modelling apprenticeship



Business Secretary Vince Cable meets West Thames College and Nissan apprentices (from left) Robert Bennett, Joanna Bond, and Sanny Kumar. Also pictured is one of Dr Cable's ministerial aides

Business Secretary Vince Cable helped Nissan and West Thames College to launch an apprenticeship that will shape the future of car design.

Dr Cable was joined at the car firm's European design centre in Paddington, London, by Andy Palmer, Nissan executive vice president, to unveil the clay modelling apprenticeship programme.

The scheme is designed to address a national shortage in skilled sculptors who give form to the vision of car designers.

Dr Cable met the first three apprentices — Sanny Kumar, 18, Joanna Bond, 19, and

Robert Bennett, 23. They were selected from more than 900 applicants.

Joanna said: "Clay modelling is a very specialist role and not a job you can just walk into. This apprenticeship is giving me the opportunity to get my qualifications and go straight into work."

College principal Marjorie Semple said: "We are really excited to be working in partnership with Nissan on this amazing project. This fills a gap in the industry and opens up fantastic opportunities for young people who want to pursue a career in this sector."

Want your college or training provider to appear on these pages?

Send your stories with pictures to news@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course of students where applicable

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Katie Channon, model Lottie Channon, Carrie Anne Le Pavoux, model Liz Burgin and Rachel Hugginson

Hairdressers are three cuts above the rest

Three students from the same college won top 10 places at one of the hairdressing industry's toughest national competitions.

Rachel Hugginson, 17, from Dursley, who studies VRQ level three in hairdressing at South Gloucestershire and Stroud College, came third in the junior cut and colour category, while Katie Channon, 22, came fourth in the junior blow dry category.

Katie, from King Stanley, said: "I really enjoy competitions and it is definitely something I will continue to do in the future. The buzz you get is worth the nerves . . . as soon as I finished one event I couldn't wait to do the next. It is a brilliant experience and a great thing to be involved with."

Their classmate Carrie Le Pavoux, 21 from Eastington, finished in the top 10 of the Uptown Girl competition.

Tutor Rachel Garside said: "All three students did exceptionally well against the tough competition."



Cabinet-making champions Lizzie Shiner, Sam Brister and David Williams

Moulton students build on success

Five learners from one Midlands college will have the chance to build on their success in the national final of the UK SkillBuild competition after triumphing in a regional heat.

Moulton College student Attila Turbok, 19, came first in the wall and floor tiling category, while Brent Willis, 18, came first in the joinery competition.

Cabinet-making students David Williams, Sam Brister and Lizzie Shiner, all 19, took first, second and third places respectively in their category.

David said: "I feel very proud to have won the cabinet-making heat this year, after coming second in 2012 and working hard to improve the speed and technique of my handskills."

"It shows I'm one of the best young tradespeople in the area, which I think is definitely something I can be proud of."

The finalists of the regional heat, one of 15 taking place around the UK, will compete at national level later this year.

Golden Radio award for young producers



Libby Lovell, Ian Macdonald, Katie Wright and Charlie Bickerton

Cheshire media students struck gold in a college competition to create a local radio news show, winning a Golden Radio award.

Teams at South Cheshire College researched their project by listening to local radio stations and used college studios to produce their shows, which were then judged by their classmates and media tutor Jeffrey Fox.

The winning team, Libby Lovell, 16, Ian Macdonald, Katie Wright, and Charlie Bickerton, all 17, chose to produce a show aimed at younger listeners, who they felt were not always targeted by mainstream broadcasters.

Katie, from Crewe, said: "This was a fantastic project and gave us great experience of working as a team and using the college's broadcast and editing facilities."

The winners were presented with an Oscar-style golden radio as a trophy.

Jeffrey said: "The students all showed great professionalism and dedication throughout the project, exploring an area of media that was completely new to them."

Drumming up support for Kent hospice



Philip Nelson organised, hosted and drummed in the charity show

A foundation learning student from Kent has raised £200 by organising, hosting and performing in a charity concert.

Drummer Philip Nelson, 18, who has a mild form of cerebral palsy, staged the bash in aid of the Heart of Kent Hospice in Aylesford.

He said: "We had several really good acts and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, so it was a good night in my eyes."

"I think the concert proved that just because somebody is disabled, it doesn't mean they're not capable of doing the same things able-bodied people are."

Philip put the concert together with help from his classmate Daniel Rice, 17, from Maidstone, who inspired Philip's choice of charity.

"A relative of his who passed away recently was cared for by staff at the hospice," said Philip.

"He wanted to do something to say thank-you, and this is what we came up with."



The troupe of dance and musical theatre learners who performed in the charity show

Dancers put best foot forward for charity

Young dancers in Yorkshire have staged a dance showcase to raise money for a charity that helps children born with severe eye problems.

The level three dance and musical theatre students from Doncaster College raised £700 with the show, entitled 'Through our eyes', which was donated to MACS, the Micro and Anophthalmic Children's Society, which supports children born without eyes or with underdeveloped eyes, and their families.

Marie Wroe, show organiser and performing arts course leader, said: "The charity came to our attention when a fellow college lecturer's baby was diagnosed with microphthalmia at only three weeks old in 2012, so it was important for us to raise money and awareness."

The charity aims to help families affected by the condition have a sense of normality in their lives, by running family days and weekends, where those affected can meet and support each other, as well as providing specialist equipment.



Former Warrington Collegiate bricklaying apprentice Ashley Terron competing in Australia

Another brick in the wall

The foundations of WorldSkills success have been laid Down Under for a 20-year-old Cheshire student.

Former Warrington Collegiate apprentice bricklayer Ashley Terron, who now studies construction and property management at the University of Salford, took gold at the Global Skills Challenge in Australia.

The competition is seen as a warm-up for July's WorldSkills in Leipzig — where he will also be aiming for gold having already been selected for the UK team bound for Germany.

"I'm over the moon," said Ashley, from Appleton, near Warrington.

"The competition was the fiercest I've ever faced so I'm delighted to win gold. I'll now be training hard to make sure I win gold at WorldSkills."

Paul Gould, curriculum manager for construction and the built environment at Warrington Collegiate, said: "From the start I knew that Ashley would do well. He was an exceptional student, talented and totally focused on being the best. I have high hopes of his achieving gold at Leipzig in the summer."

FE Week campus round-up

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Katie Bagshaw, Jess Trimble, Adam Millar, all 18, and Keith Maddox, from Lytham St Annes Spitfire Memorial Fund

Students get hands-on with history

A replica Second World War Spitfire dropped in on learners in Salford to help bring their history A-level to life.

The iconic aircraft was brought into Pendleton Sixth Form Centre by staff from the Lytham St Annes Spitfire Memorial Fund, who restored the plane, who spoke to learners about its history.

Student Katie Bagshaw said: "Seeing the Spitfire in real life helps you to understand what

it was like for pilots sitting in the aircraft and feeling how small it is in the cockpit makes you appreciate the conditions they were fighting in."

It is thought that there are only 75 original Spitfires still flying.

Student Jess Trimble said: "I've never seen anything like this before other than in a museum; it's definitely going to help me visualise and understand the Second World War aspects of our course."



Agriculture students Laura Claxton, 16, and Dan Fellows, 17, with some rare new arrivals

The future's black at Sparsholt

Most families might have just one black sheep, but at a college in Hampshire, a ewe has given birth to four of them.

The arrival of the black lambs at Sparsholt College is an event so rare it happens once in a generation.

Shepherd John Garrett, who has 35 years' experience in the industry and worked at the college for the last 23 years, has never seen this many black lambs born at once.

"As with all farmers we are very used to

multiple births and our students are trained to deal with such circumstances," he said.

"However, quads are rather rare which does make this latest litter very special."

The lambs were born to a Suffolk cross ewe and a Welsh black ram.

John added: "I've had to wait over 35 years to experience my first quad of black lambs so I hope the agriculture students realise just how fortunate they are."

College opens wide for Ministerial visit



Sandwell College dental nursing apprentices Danniella Wyatt, 20, and Charlotte Rae, 22, brush up on their skills with tutor Janyne Rogers and Skills Minister Matthew Hancock

It was smiles all round as Skills Minister Matthew Hancock visited a West Midland college.

He toured the £77m Central Campus at Sandwell College, in West Bromwich, and met dental nursing apprentices.

He visited on Friday, May 3, and heard from representatives from Bhandal Dental Practice which is developing a new, employer-led apprenticeship with the college.

Mr Hancock also presented trophies to winners of the college enterprise society Piggy Bank Micro Business Challenge — a competition for eight new student start-ups

run for four weeks.

"It's great to be able to reward and recognise the initiative and enterprise on display in Sandwell College's Piggy Bank Challenge. It's this originality that proves what is on offer linking further education to enterprise," he said.

College principal Val Bailey said: "We are very pleased to welcome the minister, to show him the state-of-the-art facilities on offer at Central Campus and in particular how we are developing employer-led apprenticeship programmes to meet evolving demand."

Business advice from BBC Apprentice star



From left: Loughborough College tourism management BA students Jack Clements, 21, and Wjedha Walton, 20, with 2008 Apprentice winner Lee McQueen

A former winner of BBC hit The Apprentice gave students his own hints and tips on how to get on in the workplace.

Lee McQueen, who got the nod from Lord Sugar in 2008, was at Loughborough College's Employability Week.

He spent a day motivating students to stand out from the crowd in the world of work and passed on his career success do's as well as the definite don'ts.

"To set out your goals and achieve them

is incredibly rewarding. Today my passion is about helping others to realise their potential and provide them with a platform to go on and achieve," said Mr McQueen.

Tina Smith, lecturer and foundation degree course manager at Loughborough College, said: "Every single student at Mr McQueen's lectures and workshops went away inspired and buzzing with ideas on how to go about building their career or business."

Head of faculty - Business and Social Science

Maidstone Campus

- Salary circa £46,119
- Attractive benefits package

Are you INNOVATIVE, INSPIRING and DYNAMIC?

MidKent College is a large and successful College operating on two main campuses serving Medway and Maidstone. The College was graded 'good' overall with 'outstanding' Capacity to Improve at its last Ofsted inspection. Since then, success rates have continued to rise and the College achieved its best ever results in 2012. The College benefits from having outstanding financial strength and a management team committed to ensuring that all students enjoy an exceptional learning experience.

Following the retirement of the current post holder, MidKent College requires a committed, inspirational and enthusiastic leader for the well-established Faculty of Business and Social Sciences at our Maidstone Campus. Within the newly developed campus, with state of the art facilities, the Faculty includes A Levels, Access, Business and IT. This is an ideal opportunity for a dynamic and progressive individual who would like the challenge of leading an already successful Faculty to even greater things.

To apply for this position please contact job.applications@midkent.ac.uk for an application pack.

Closing Date Midday 23rd May 2013
Interviews will take place w/c 3rd June 2013

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MidKent College

MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer

NCC skills

NCC Skills is a highly successful private training company and a leading provider of English and Maths qualifications for Adults in England. We work in partnership with Further Education colleges and employers to engage with learners who have not yet achieved basic levels of literacy and numeracy. We are expanding and are seeking to recruit an Office Manager and Regional Manager.

Office Manager

Harpenden

£35,000 to £40,000

We are looking to recruit a highly experienced and dynamic Manager for our offices in Harpenden. This key pivotal role is to manage two in-house teams; Telemarketing and Administration, whilst also acting as a key point of reference for our field based delivery teams, employers and college partners.

Regional Manager

Field Based

£35,000

We are now looking to recruit a Regional Manager to manage and support a team of field based Tutors in the delivery of NCC Skills programmes. Working as part of the Quality Management team and reporting to the Head of Quality & Delivery, this role is key in creating and supporting a culture of excellence and maintaining quality of provision.

Potential candidates should apply via email to Amanda.fisher@ncc.ac.uk with a covering letter and CV.

Career Opportunities

Canterbury College

We are a Further and Higher Education College in the heart of Kent with around 10,000 students across 500 courses. Our £50m Campus is home to nearly 800 staff and we have great career opportunities which may be right for you.

.....

Manager of Higher Education & Access to Higher Education (Business & Technology) ref: 11/61
37 hours a week, salary starting at £35,408
Evening and weekend work may be necessary

We are seeking a Manager with experience of higher education in colleges and a strong commitment to improving teaching and learning, enhancing student satisfaction and increasing success rates. This management role requires complex timetabling and planning skills, with the ability to motivate and performance manage a team of lecturers. The person we are looking for will have an understanding of current HE in FE quality and standards and be able to work effectively both cross-College and with university partners.

.....

Closing date: Tuesday 21st May 2013 at 12 noon

For an information pack please call the Human Resources Office quoting the above reference or visit our web site.

Staff benefits include:

- Pension & Life Assurance Scheme
- Close to City Centre
- Sports Hall & Gym
- Generous Holiday Allowance

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Achievement Training

Managing Director - Achievement Training (Ref: 078B)

Full-time - c. £50,000

We are looking for a highly motivated and inspirational leader to drive this Plymouth-based private training provider onto outstanding. Reporting to the Board, you will lead a team of 100 plus staff offering a range of educational and vocational provision, including Apprenticeships.

This is a strategic position, requiring a learner-centred focus and commitment to further strengthening excellent teaching, learning and assessment. With a sound knowledge of further education and work-based learning, you will have significant and demonstrable management experience at Director level, and a proven track record of leading an organisation through change.

For an informal discussion, please contact Nicola Cove on **01752 305396**.

Further details can be found at www.achievementtraining.com.

Closing date: Monday 27 May
Interview date: Monday 10 and Tuesday 11 June

City College Plymouth is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

• The College is an equal opportunities employer

Gazelle Colleges Group

Want your college or training provider to appear on these pages?

Send your stories with pictures to news@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course of students where applicable

Vice Principal

TEACHING & LEARNING

- Salary circa £85K
- Attractive benefits package

Are you INNOVATIVE,
INSPIRING and DYNAMIC?

MidKent College is seeking an exceptional vice principal to build on the improvements already made in teaching, learning and assessment and curriculum design.

The successful candidate will be passionate about teaching, learning and the student experience. They will possess the skills and imagination to develop innovative approaches within a curriculum that meets the needs and aspirations of all students.

This is a fantastic opportunity for an experienced leader to join the forward-thinking senior team of a large, successful college with two ultra-modern campuses in Medway and Maidstone.

Email job.applications@midkent.ac.uk to request a job application pack. Alternatively call HR director Andrea Ashman for an informal discussion on 01634 383544 or to arrange a tour of our impressive facilities.

Closing date: Monday, 20 May 2013

Assessments and Interviews will take place on Monday, 10 June 2013



Clinical Educator

Circa £35,000 | 38 hours per week
Job ref: JDSFHLTD23



Skills for Health is the Sector Skills Council for the health sector.

We are working in partnership with NHS North West supporting the delivery of highly regarded pre-employment training programmes, including apprenticeships, for 16 to 18 year olds who wish to pursue a career within the NHS. These programmes are run in partnership with NHS organisations and local Further Education providers; this post is a partnership with Salford City College and Salford Royal Foundation Trust.

We are looking for someone special to work as part of our Greater Manchester Cadet Programme; this post offers an exciting career opportunity for a suitably qualified individual with a passion for sharing their knowledge and expertise with young people in order to support them in progressing into employment or onto higher education. The successful candidate will support 16 to 18 year old Cadets who are undertaking sector specific programmes, nationally and regionally through Skills for Health Academy North West (Academy). Cadet programmes are recognised as models of best practice, achieving excellent results in supporting young people and helping employers in the North West secure the future workforce.

For an informal discussion about this opportunity, please contact Catherine Ferguson Cadet Development Lead (GM) on 07825 522721.

Applications for this post should be made by completing the attached application form (please note we do not accept CVs as an application). Please include details of how in your view you meet the criteria set out in the job description and person specification. Apply here.

Alternatively the job description, supporting information and application form can be obtained from the Skills for Health Website or the Human Resources Department at Skills for Health, 1st Floor Goldsmiths House, Broad Plain, Bristol BS2 0JP. Email recruitment@skillsforhealth.org.uk. Telephone 0117 9221155.

The closing date is: 19 May 2013
Interviews to be held on: 5 June 2013



CHIEF EXECUTIVE

£40-50k per annum

The world of work based learning has never played a more pivotal and critical role in providing young and mature people opportunities in acquiring, developing and expanding the skills and experience necessary in a dynamic and evolving business landscape.

As a not for profit company, Nottinghamshire Training Network, (NTN), operates as a membership organisation working with a diverse range of institutions and businesses, providing access to funding and a range of services aimed at bringing more people into skilled and semi-skilled employment through nationally recognised qualifications.

The successful applicant will have the integrity, strength of character and very strong communication and negotiation skills to deal with a wide and diverse range of stakeholders and understand the challenges and opportunities facing this sector.

With vision and drive, the Chief Executive will lead the NTN team and support the Board in implementing the agreed strategy and sustain the on-going development of the organisation maintaining its reputation and support.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Delivery of NTN Business Plan
2. Representing members on a variety of Boards/Networks
3. NTN Performance including:
 - SFA Contract
 - Ofsted Inspections

Desired Experience:

1. An experienced manager with a working knowledge of work based learning
2. Good business acumen with sound financial skills
3. Ability to work on own initiative, as well as in consultation and negotiation with Board members, staff, NTN members and other stakeholders as required
4. Excellent presentation and communication skills at all levels, verbal and written, demonstrating the ability to convey complex messages clearly

The deadline for the applications is Monday 20th May 2013, 12.00 noon
To apply go to <http://www.ntn-wbl.org.uk/>

Associate Consultants



FE Associates is recognised as a highly successful major supplier of interim management and consultancy support for curriculum, finance, MIS, IT and funding in the post-16 sector.

We are looking to strengthen our team of self-employed associate consultants in all subject areas and are inviting applications from suitably qualified professionals with recent college experience at Head of Department level or above.

You will have a strong track record in your field, be motivated, flexible and conversant with the issues facing FE. You must be prepared to travel and stay away from home when required. In return we offer competitive remuneration and a friendly support from our office team.

Closing date for applications is Tuesday 28th May 2013.
Interviews will take place week commencing Monday 10th June 2013.

To apply, please email your CV to recruitment@feassociates.com or upload it via our website <http://www.feassociates.com/ja.html>

One sector...Many questions...One solution - FE Associates



www.feassociates.com

FE Week publication dates May - July 2013

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
May	13 EDITION 66	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20 EDITION 67	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31 June	1	2
	3 EDITION 68	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10 EDITION 69	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17 EDITION 70	18	19	20	21	22	23
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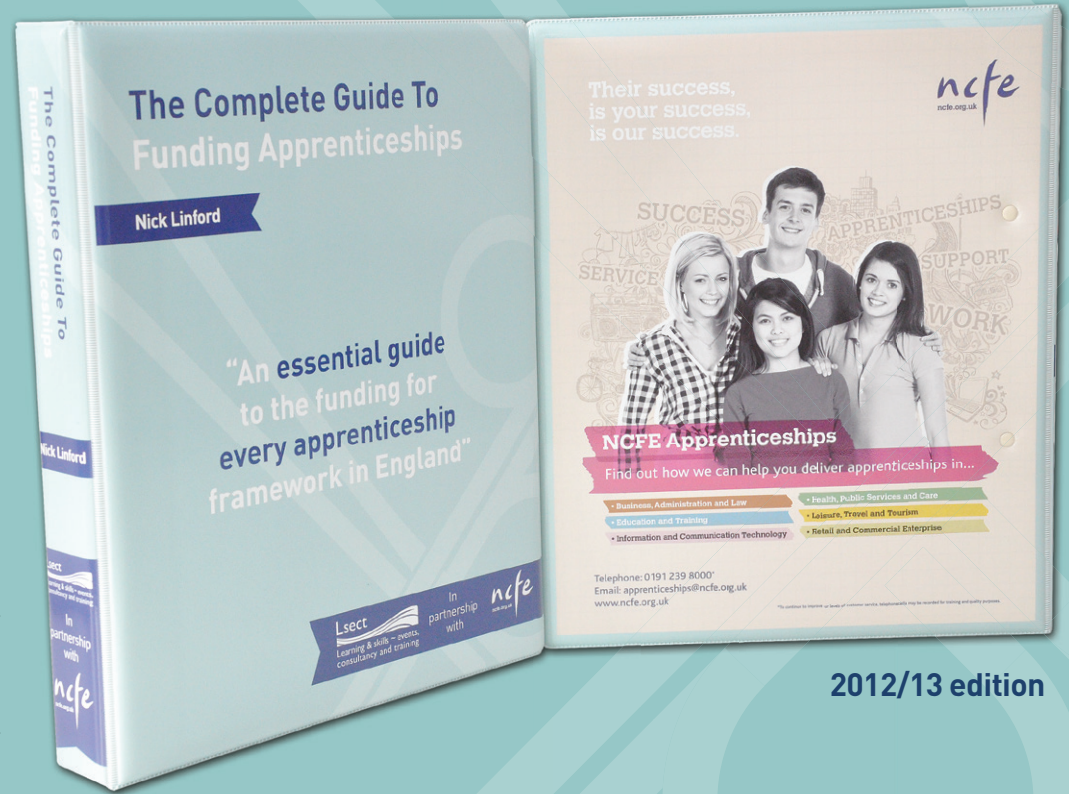
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Mark Emerson, Head of information, Systems and Planning at Chelmsford College

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Free with bookings for intro to apprenticeship funding webinars. See lsect.com for dates



FE Week Sudoku challenge

		9	6		8	5		
2		5		3		6		4
		1				3		
6			4		3			1
7			1		5			8
		7				8		
5		6		1		4		2
		4	7		6	1		

Difficulty:
EASY

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

			5	3		2	8	
		5					4	1
		2		6	4			
6								3
			7		9			
	8							7
			8	1		7		
9	7					1		
	2	8		7	6			

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Last Week's solutions

2	4	9	1	5	3	7	8	6
1	3	5	7	8	6	4	9	2
6	7	8	2	9	4	3	1	5
8	6	7	5	4	2	1	3	9
9	2	3	6	1	8	5	7	4
4	5	1	3	7	9	6	2	8
5	9	6	8	3	1	2	4	7
3	8	2	4	6	7	9	5	1
7	1	4	9	2	5	8	6	3

3	7	5	4	8	9	1	2	6
9	6	4	2	3	1	5	7	8
1	8	2	5	6	7	9	4	3
5	3	9	7	2	4	8	6	1
7	2	8	1	5	6	3	9	4
6	4	1	8	9	3	2	5	7
2	9	6	3	4	8	7	1	5
8	5	7	6	1	2	4	3	9
4	1	3	9	7	5	6	8	2

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



"Mostly this week I've been taking baby Thomas for a spin"

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter [@daniellinford](https://twitter.com/daniellinford)